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COUNTRY Peru

SUBJECT Strained Relations between Odria and

Catholic Church

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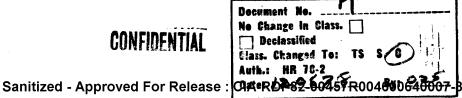
SUPPLEMENT TO

REPORT NO. 50-37700

1. On 12 March 1950 Cardinal Juan Gualberto Guevara, primate of the Catholic Church in Peru, met with a group of prominent Catholic business and professional men and other members of the Catholic clergy to discuss with them a letter he was sending to President Odria outlining the grievances of the Catholic

- 2. According to source the letter covered the following points:
 - The Catholic Church has cooperated with the government that came to power in the Arequipa revolution of 1948 but may find it necessary to withdraw support unles the Church's grievances are heeded.
 - b. The government must comply with its agreement concerning its share in the financial support of the Cardinal's establishment in addition to that normally furnished to the bishops throughout the country. The letter charges that the jovernment is not only in arrears in its support, but has reduced its support of the bishops, who have complained to the Cardinal.
 - c. The Church opposes the government efforts to control directly the placement of teachers in all schools.
 - d. The Church opposes the government's labor law which requires workers to work even on Church holidays in order to collect Sunday pay.
 - e. Cardinal Guevara had the full authorization of all the bishops to negotiate with the government and desired to discuss the matters personally with President Odria, as representative of the government.
- 3. At the 12 March meeting the Cardinal received the full support of those present. The Cardinal planned to give President Oria ample time to answer his letter, but if Odria should not be willing to attempt a settlement of existing issues the Cardinal intended to publish his letter, and at the same time roquest all Catholics to abstain from collaborating with the government. It is believed that such a move by the Cardinal would cause many resignations among Catholics holding public office.

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- 4. On 21 March Cardinal Guevara sailed for Rome where he will visit the Pope, and as proviously reported, seek the recall of the Papal Runcio in Lima, Honsignor Panico, of whom the Cardinal disapproves. On 20 March an impressive demonstration of sympathy for the Cardinal was organized by his supporters. Some 420 signatures appeared on an announcement calling for a gathering in his honor on the occasion of his departure. This demonstration was purposely organized to show the Odria government the extent of support the Cardinal enjoys. Organizers of the demonstration included many prominent business and professional ren in Lima.
- 5. As the Cardinal left for Rome the Catholic Church had another grievance against the government. The Church-State agreement calls for the government to pay the passage to Rome of every bishop in Peru once every five years. Source states that the government has not complied with this agreement, much to the displeasure of those bishops who had hoped to make the trip to Rome during this year.